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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE THEMES:

HEADLINES

BRIEFING

EDITORIAL OPINION

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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Kennedy: No Date Set for Bush-Erdogan Meeting - Sabah  
Schroeder Urges Turkey to Continue EU Reforms - Aksam  
Erdogan Gives Schroeder a Warm Welcome - Hurriyet  
Rubin: US, Turkey Will Lose if Ties Deteriorate Further -  
Aksam  
Iraqi Government Sworn In - Milliyet  
Bair Running to Third Victory in British Elections - Vatan

OPINION MAKERS

Kennedy Issues Messages on Cyprus, Armenia - Radikal  
Kennedy: Turkey, Armenia Can Find 'Middle Way' - Cumhuriyet  
Blair, Through With Iraq 'Ordeal,' Close to Election Victory  
- Zaman  
Berlusconi Changed Report Blaming US for Killing of Italian  
Agent - Zaman  
North Korea: Bush the Father of State Terror - Yeni Safak  
Fundamentalist Jews Call for Prayers for Sharon's Death -  
Yeni Safak  
US F-18 Hornet Crashes in Iraq, Pilot Killed - Cumhuriyet  
Lyndie England Admits Abu-Ghraib Torture - Radikal  
Radical Clergy to Set Up Islamist TV Channel in Afghanistan  
- Radikal

BRIEFING

DAS Kennedy Visits Ankara: US Deputy Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs Laura Kennedy, referring to the proposal by PM Erdogan for a joint committee of historians to examine genocide claims and President Kocaryan's call for intergovernmental dialogue, said that 'these proposals are not antithetical to one another and could be reconciled.' 'The two sides could find a middle way,' she added. 'Why couldn't both proposals be implemented at the same time?' The Cyprus and Armenian issues were taken up during Kennedy's visit to Ankara, which included meetings at the Foreign Ministry, a discussion with NSC Chairman Yigit Alpogan, and a roundtable with parliamentarians. Following her meetings in Ankara, Kennedy gave the following statements to journalists (as reported by leftist-nationalist "Cumhuriyet"):

On Armenia: "We see Prime Minister Erdogan's proposal as positive, and we support it. Recent developments give us some hope. We hope that an agreement can be reached on these proposals. Nobody in Armenia has territorial claims on Turkey. I have asked this during my meetings in Armenia. Foreign Minister Oksanyan has said that Armenia recognizes the Kars Treaty. There are important efforts underway on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue."

On Cyprus: "In order to start a new process to resolve the Cyprus issue, the Secretary General has called on the sides to submit their objections to the Annan Plan. There has been no response from the Greek Cypriot Government. The ball is in the Greek Cypriots court. We are also calling on Papadopoulos to submit his views. We are doing all we can to ease the isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. We have approved \$30.5 million in assistance. We have efforts underway to develop trade and the economy. On direct flights to Ercan Airport, we are still in the decision-making process."

On Incirlik: "We are very pleased by the decision to allow Incirlik to be used as a logistics cargo hub. We appreciate Turkey's support in the Global War on terrorism, including taking over the command of ISAF in Afghanistan."

On a Possible Erdogan Meeting with President Bush: "We view Prime Minister Erdogan's recent statement on US-Turkish relations as positive. There may be ups and downs in US-Turkish relations, but the relationship will survive. As

far as I know, we still do not have a date for a meeting between the Prime Minister and President Bush."

**Erdogan Evaluates Visit to Israel, Palestine:** Speaking to ruling AK Party lawmakers yesterday, Prime Minister Erdogan said that his recent visit to Israel and Palestine had been necessitated by national, humanitarian, and regional obligations, and not because 'others' wanted it. Erdogan was responding to criticism that his visit to Israel was motivated by his desire to get an appointment with President Bush when he travels to Washington in the coming weeks. Erdogan said that during his visit to the region, Palestine seemed like an 'open prison.' 'Palestine should not be left like that,' Erdogan noted, adding that Turkey should encourage both parties to pursue peace and exert maximum effort at the UN and with related countries to that end.

**Erdogan to Visit US in Second Half of June:** Ruling AK Party sources denied reports that President Bush will decline to meet Prime Minister Erdogan during his upcoming visit to the United States. The sources told Turkey's private all-news channel NTV on Tuesday that Erdogan's visit to the US will take place in the second half of June. The sources claimed that President Bush told Erdogan at the funeral service held for the late Pontiff John Paul II that Erdogan's visit had been put on the program at the White House.

**Iraqi Military Officials Meet With PKK:** Mass-appeal "Hurriyet" cites the northern Iraq Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) official website "Peyamner" as reporting that Iraqi military officials met with PKK militants in the Kandil Mountain to discuss issues related to border security. The same report also cites the "Media" daily in Erbil as claiming that an Iraqi military delegation met with PKK representative Ali Haydar Kaytan on April 29.

**Columnist Warns Against PKK Attacks in Cities:** "Hurriyet" columnist Fatih Altayli warned for the second consecutive day that PKK militants have smuggled significant amounts of C-4 explosives into Turkish cities and tourist areas and are planning attacks there during the tourist season. Altayli claimed that a bomb made from C-4 and placed under a bridge across the Golden Horn in Istanbul last week was part of the PKK effort (responsibility for the Istanbul bomb was claimed by the "Kurdish Liberation Hawks").

**US Troops Block Turkmen Humanitarian Aid from Entering Tal Afar:** Islamist-oriented "Yeni Safak" reports that Iraqi Turkmen Front (ITF) leader Faruk Abdullah Abdurrahman and his delegation were denied access to Tal Afar by US troops and Iraqi and Kurdish guards in the northern Iraqi town after a car bomb attack which claimed 40 lives at the funeral of a Kurdish politician. Abdurrahman was reportedly taking humanitarian aid to Tal Afar. The Iraqi police questioned Abdurrahman and his men for three hours in Mosul, according to the report. The report claims that 'confusion has reigned' in Tal Afar for the past three days.

**Schroeder in Turkey:** Accompanied by 600 businessmen, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder arrived in Ankara Tuesday evening on a state visit. On arrival, Schroeder voiced support for Turkey with regard to the EU, Cyprus, and Armenia issues. At a dinner last night with Prime Minister Erdogan, Schroeder said he welcomed the PM's initiative to form a joint committee of historians to study Armenian 'genocide' claims. The Chancellor also urged Erdogan to sign the EU accession protocol before October 3. The PM reportedly said that 'Turkey has done all it can for EU membership. Now it's your turn.' The German Chancellor is to meet President Sezer and the Prime Minister again on Wednesday before moving on to Istanbul later in the day, where he will pay a visit to the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate. "Cumhuriyet" notes that the term 'ecumenical' is used in Schroeder's program to refer to Patriarch Bartolomew. German diplomatic sources told the paper that by doing so, Schroeder displayed support for the 'ecumenical' title of the Greek Orthodox Church in Turkey. They said the 'ecumenical' reference was an effort to underline the importance of protecting the rights of non-Muslim minorities in Turkey.

**DEHAP Officials Jailed in Bitlis for Kurdish Songs:** "Milliyet" reports that 7 leaders of the pro-Kurdish DEHAP's provincial party board in the southeastern city of Bitlis were sentenced to five months in prison for playing Kurdish songs and chanting slogans at a May 2003 party conference.

**EDITORIAL OPINION: Turkey-US Relations; Iraq**

**"What Did We Give Away at Incirlik?"** Kemal Yavuz commented in the sensational-mass appeal "Aksam" (5/4): "On April 24, the Turkish government extended the agreement on the US use of Incirlik air base for one more year. According to US and Turkish officials, the US was given new prerogatives along with the extension of the

agreement. What did we give at Incirlik? It is difficult to say, as this decree was never published in the official gazette. Although FM Gul said that 'there is no secret here' and assured us that 'we have not given a blank check,' the Turkish public will never know the details of the decree. Former US Ambassador to Turkey Mark Parris recently wrote an article in 'Turkish Policy Quarterly' on Turkish-US relations. In his column, Ambassador Parris said that 'the US is very much interested in the region around Turkey. This US interest, naturally, is going to affect many of Turkey's major interests. Moreover, Washington will realize in time that it is much easier to do business with Turkey than to try to do business by ignoring Turkey.' Ambassador Parris added the following question to his comments: 'If the request for to use Incirlik as a logistics hub isn't proof of this fact, then what else could it mean?' Isn't this an interesting observation? The picture at Incirlik looks quite different when viewed from this angle. There is one other sensitive issue we should be careful about -- that every single prerogative that is given to the US at Incirlik will bring new responsibilities and new dangers to Turkey. Diplomacy is supposed to be a give-and-take process. But we have to make sure to take what we need in return for what we give. If Turkey has given new prerogatives to the US at Incirlik in return for the US not passing an 'Armenian genocide' resolution, then this can not be considered good diplomacy."

#### "Relations Between the AKP and the US"

Oral Calislar wrote in the leftist-nationalist "Cumhuriyet" (5/4): "The AKP is caught between requests by the United States (including the wider use of Incirlik Air Base) and the views of Turkish society. More than 80 percent of the people do not support US policies in the region. The AKP needs to take this into account. The US wants to keep Turkey on its side, but the AKP is not willing to take such a position openly. It is caught between two fires. It is being criticized by some for cooperating with the United States and by others for damaging relations with the United States. There are even those who warn that deteriorating relations with the US could spell the end for this government. This situation has no doubt played a role in the growing tension and numerous provocative events we have seen in recent days. Some believe that certain circles have seen that the United States is upset with the AKP and have therefore felt emboldened to oppose the AKP government more directly. They are, in effect, narrowing the areas over which the AKP has control. One group is saying: 'see, we told you to comply with US requests or else you would face a crisis.' As a result, the AKP feels itself cornered by the United States and forced to accept US views on certain issues. The other dimension of the problem relates to the European Union. Those in Turkey who have opposed Turkey's membership in the EU and the process of democratization are pleased by the tension between the US and the AKP. The recent anti-EU statements by the AKP leadership have been music to the ears of these people. The AKP is now trying to improve its relations with the US. As part of this effort, it is continuing to make statements that will be used by EU opponents in Turkey. Some are saying that Turkey, as it tries to get relations with the US back on track, is distancing itself from the EU. It's hard to say how much of this speculation is true. But we can say this much for sure: the AKP's problems in dealing with the EU and the US have been growing since December 17. Even if we accept that some of the reasons for this are beyond the control of the AKP, the lack of maturity shown by the party leadership in dealing with these problems and their angry reactions have only inflamed the situation. We are going through a convoluted period."

#### "They Call Their Colony A Democracy"

Nuh Gonultas wrote in the conservative "Dunden Bugune Tercuman" (5/4): "Elections have taken place in Iraq. Now the Iraqi Security Forces are dealing with the insurgents there, as US troops work to realize their plan to turn Iraq into a US colony. While 85 percent of the population are Arabs, Jelal Talabani - a Kurd -- was elected as the President. This gives veto rights to the Kurds for all kinds of laws and the constitution. Until the next election, the elected Iraqi government will not be able to do anything but carry out hundreds of orders given by the United States. These hundreds of orders, originally presented by Iraq's former governor Paul Bremer, will put Iraqi infrastructure up for sale to US companies. The US has not given a date for its withdrawal from Iraq. The occupation of Iraq is no longer covered by the Western media. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced the other day that US Ambassador to Afghanistan Khalilzad has been assigned as the new Ambassador to Baghdad. Khalilzad was an advisor to Wolfowitz, Cheney, and Perle. He had proposed the occupation of Iraq in the 1990s for its oil resources. Khalilzad became famous as a 'colonial Ambassador' in a very short period of time. Two years after the occupation, Iraq has become a terrible place to live."

